

## **REMARKS**

### **I. Present Status of Patent Application**

The Office Action maintains the rejection of claims 1-31, substantially as set forth in the First Office Action, mailed November 20, 2003.

### **II. Examiner Interview**

On May 24, 2004, Applicants' attorney conducted an Examiner Interview with Examiner Kaveh Abrishamkar. Applicants thank Examiner Abrishamkar for the generosity of his time.

In that Examiner Interview, the Applicants' attorney and Examiner Abrishamkar reached a tentative agreement that independent claims 1, 11, 18, and 25, which were rejected under the judicially-created doctrine of double patenting, were not anticipated by the cited references. Thus, an agreement was reached that, pending approval from the Examiner's supervisor, independent claims 1, 11, 18, and 25 would be allowable over the prior art. These are the only independent claims pending in the application.

Examiner Abrishamkar and Applicants' attorney further agreed that the remaining arguments directed to the dependent claims would be submitted in a formal response to the Office Action.

Applicants thank Examiner Abrishamkar again for his time and cooperation. As suggested by Examiner Abrishamkar, the following remarks address the rejection of all pending claims in the application.

### **III. Discussion of Rejections**

**A.      *Rejection of Claims 1-3 Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)***

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being unpatentable over Kuroda, U.S. Patent Number 5,935,248. For the reasons set forth below, Applicants traverse this rejection.

**1.      Independent Claims 1**

The Office Action rejects independent claims 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being unpatentable over Kuroda. As noted above, with reference to the Examiner Interview, Examiner Abrishamkar has indicated claim 1 as being allowable, pending approval by his supervisor.

Applicants thank the Examiner for allowance of claim 1.

**2.      Dependent Claims 2-3**

Claims 2-3 depend from allowable independent claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit that, insofar as claims 2-3 depend from an allowable independent claim, for at least this reason, claims 2-3 are allowable. Applicants, therefore, respectfully request allowance of claims 2-3.

**B.      *Rejection of Claims 4-31 Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)***

The Office Action rejects claims 4-31 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuroda in view of Jurkevich, *et al.*, U.S. Patent Number 5,164,938. For the reasons set forth below, Applicants traverse this rejection.

**1. Independent Claims 11, 18, and 25**

The Office Action rejects independent claims 11, 18, and 25 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kuroda in view of Jurkevich. As noted above, with reference to the Examiner Interview, Examiner Abrishamkar has indicated claims 11, 18, and 25 as being allowable, pending approval by his supervisor.

Applicants thank the Examiner for allowance of claim 11, 18, and 25.

**2. Dependent Claims 4-10, 12-17, 19-24, and 26-31**

Claims 4-10 depend from allowable independent claim 1; claims 12-17 depend from allowable independent claim 11; claims 19-24 depend from allowable independent claim 18; and claims 26-31 depend from allowable independent claim 25. Applicants respectfully submit that, insofar as claims 4-10, 12-17, 19-24, and 26-31 depend from allowable independent claims, for at least this reason, claims 4-10, 12-17, 19-24, and 26-31 are allowable. Applicants, therefore, respectfully request allowance of claims 4-10, 12-17, 19-24, and 26-31.

**IV. References Made of Record**

The references made of record have been considered, but are not believed to affect the patentability of the presently-pending claims.

## **CONCLUSION**

Applicants submit that all claims are now in proper condition for allowance, and respectfully request that the Examiner pass this case to issuance. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (770) 933-9500.

If there is any deficiency in this fee, or if additional fees are required, you are hereby authorized to charge any and all such fees to Deposit Account No. 20-0778.

Respectfully submitted,



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